

REMARKS

Claims 6, 7 and 19-24, all the claims pending in the application, stand rejected. Claims 21-24 have been cancelled. New claims 25 and 26 are added as dependent claims. No new search or consideration is required, as these claims depend from allowable claims, as subsequently explained.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 21-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. This rejection is rendered moot by the cancellation of the claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 6, 19, 21 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Nakao et al (5,683,784). This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

As a preliminary matter, Applicant notes that the Examiner has reconsidered his initial indication of allowability and, upon further examination of the teachings of Nakao, finds that the limitations of the rejected claims to be anticipated by the teachings in Nakao et al. Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner is mistaken in the current understanding of Nakao et al and submits that the allowability of the claims should be reinstated.

The Examiner indicates in respect of Nakao et al that since the binder for use in the first coating may be **polyvinyl alcohol**, ethylene-vinyl acetate, an acrylic resin, or a urethane resin while the binder for use in the second coating may be starch, carboxymethyl cellulose, hydroxymethyl cellulose, Nakao anticipates applicant's claim to "coating a solution of a synthetic polymer onto one side of a synthetic fiber fabric and then a solution of a semi-synthetic or natural polymer onto the other side of said fabric."

However, Nakao identifies as the binder for use in the second coating, synthetic polymer such as **polyvinyl alcohol**, polyvinyl pyrrolidone and the like other than semi-synthetic or natural polymer as set forth above, and hence any organic material will do as the binder for use in the second coating. The first example of Nakao employs a hydrophilic acrylic resin as the

binder for use in the first coating while it employs **polyvinyl alcohol** as the binder for use in the second coating.

The polyvinyl alcohol used in Nakano is identified as a suitable ink holding agent of high wettability according to the present invention. The binders for use in the first and second coating of Nakano are the ink holding agent of high wettability, respectively, of the present invention.

From this, it is evident that, there is no teaching or understanding in Nakano of "coating a solution of a synthetic polymer onto one side of a synthetic fiber fabric and then a solution of a semi-synthetic or natural polymer onto the other side of said fabric". This represents a clear difference between the present invention and Nakao.

According to Nakao, from the expression of "surface layer mainly comprised of boehmite" in Claim 1 of Nakao, the face to which second coating is applied (the face which is treated by treating solution including ink holding agent of low wettability as indicated by the Examiner) is the face onto which inkjet printing is made.

On the other hand, according to the present invention, the face which is treated by treating solution including ink holding agent having high wettability is a face onto which ink jet printing is made.

If the face for ink jet printing is reversed as in Nakao, it is not possible to obtain "ink jet printed fabric requiring inhibition of ink bleeding from design patterns printed on the fabric and ink penetration into its inside, and prevention of white exposure, nonuniform coloration and back staining" which is an effect of the present invention. Further, as already asserted, according to Nakao, the applied material remains on the final product upon completion of ink jet printing. That is, the final product of Nakao exhibits in the the form of ("layer"+ "fabric" + "layer").

On the other hand, the ink holding agent of high wettability and the ink holding agent of low wettability are provided to temporarily hold ink which is used for ink jet printing, and the ink holding agent per se is soaped at the succeeding soaping treatment after moving ink onto the fabric in the wet heat treatment upon printing, which is evident from the embodiments.

In short, the final product of the present invention is in the form of a dyed "fabric". In other words, color is merely stuck to the surface of the fabric according to Nakao, while the fabric is dyed according to the present invention.

Finally, the present invention is considerably different from the cited references with respect to the order of the coating steps. In particular, this would involve first applying a solution containing an ink holding agent of high wettability to one side of a fabric and thereafter applying the ink holding agent of **low wettability to the non-printing side**.

In short, Nakao does not disclose the sequence required by the Applicants in their claims because its goal is not to dye a fabric, but to apply a print onto a surface of the fabric. Thus, the claims cannot be anticipated.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 7, 20, 22 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakao in view of Maeda (JP 09-279486). This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

Nakao is distinguishable from the invention of claim 7 for the same reasons given with respect to claim 6 above. Maeda does not remedy this deficiency, as it is simply cited for a teaching of a napped fabric.

Thus, Applicants submit that all the claims now are patentable and that the application should be passed to issue.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Amendment Under 37 CFR 1.111
09/912,561

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

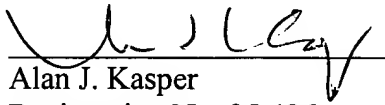
Respectfully submitted,

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

23373

CUSTOMER NUMBER


Alan J. Kasper
Registration No. 25,426

Date: October 13, 2004